

flagrant, for it is said that he rarely, if ever, draws from Nature, and that his entire work is done from photographs. Be this as it may, his friends have stated a hundred times in the Press that he uses photography, and it would seem that his work shows the mechanical aid more and more every day. Some years ago he went to Japan, and brought home a number of pictures which suited drawing-rooms, and were soon sold. I did not see the exhibition, but I saw some pictures done by him at that time—one, an especially good one, I happened upon in the Grosvenor Gallery. This picture, although superficial and betraying when you looked into it a radical want of knowledge, was not lacking in charm. In French studios there is a slang phrase which expresses the meretricious charm of this picture—*c'est du chic*; and the meaning of this very expressive term is ignorance affecting airs of capacity. Now the whole of Mr. Menpes' picture was comprised in this term. The manner of the master, who, certain of the shape and value of the shadow under an eye, will let his hand run, was reproduced; but the exact shape and value of the shadows were not to be gathered from the photograph, and the result was a charming but a hollow mockery. And then the 'colour-notes'; with what certainty they were dashed into the little pictures from Japan, and how dexterously the touch of the master who knows exactly what he wants was parodied! At the first glance you were deceived; at the second you saw that it was only such cursive taste and knowledge as a skilful photographer who had been allowed the run of a painter's studio for a few months might display. Nowhere was there any definite intention; it was something that had been well committed to memory, that had been well remembered, but only half-understood. Everything floated—drawing, values, colours—for there was not sufficient knowledge to hold and determine the place of any one. Since those days Mr. Menpes has continued to draw from photographs, and—the base of his artistic education being deficient from the first—the result of his long abstention from Nature is apparent, even to the least critical, in the some hundred and seventy paintings, etchings, and what he calls diamond-points on ivory. Diamond-points on ivory may astonish the unthinking public, but artists are interested in the drawing, and not what the drawing is done upon. Besides the diamond-points, there is quite sufficient matter in this exhibition to astonish visitors from Peckham, Pentonville, Islington, and perhaps Clapham, but not Bayswater—no, not Bayswater. There are frames in every sort of pattern—some are even adorned with gold tassels—and the walls have been especially prepared to receive them. These pictures and etchings purport to be representations of India, Burma, and Cashmere. The diamond-points, I believe, purport to be diamond-points. In some of the etchings there is the same ingenious touch of hand, but anything more woeful than the oil pictures cannot easily be imagined. In truth, they do not call for any serious criticism; and were it not for the fact that they afforded an opportunity of making some remarks—which seemed to me to be worth making—about the influence of photography in modern art, I should have left the public to find for itself the value of this attempt, in the grandiloquent words of the catalogue, "to bring before my countrymen the æsthetic and artistic capabilities, and the beauty in various forms, that are to be found in our great Indian Empire." To criticise the pictures in detail is impossible; but I will try to give an impression of the exhibition as a whole. Imagine a room hung with ordinary school slates, imagine that all these slates have been gilt, and that some have been adorned with gold tassels instead of the usual sponge, and into each let there be introduced a dome, a camel, a palm-tree, or any other conventional sign of the East.

On examining the paintings thus sumptuously encased you will notice that the painter has not been able to affect with the brush any slight air of

capacity; the material betrays him at every point. The etchings are *du chic*; but the paintings are merely abortive. The handling is in every instance the same, and it consists in scrubbing the colour into the canvas, attaining in this manner a texture which sometimes reminds you of wool, sometimes of sand, sometimes of both. The poor little bits of blue sky stick to the houses; there is nowhere a breath of air, a ray of light, nor even a conventionally graduated sky or distance; there is not an angle, or a pillar, or a stairway finely observed; there is not even any such eagerness in the delineation of an object as would show that the painter felt any interest in his work; every sketch tells the tale of a burden taken up and thankfully relinquished. Here we have white wall, but it has neither depth nor consistency; behind it a bit of sandy sky; the ground is yellow, and there is a violet shadow upon it. But the colour of the ground does not show through the shadow, therefore the shadow is a daub of violet paint. Look, for example, at No. 36. Is it possible to believe that that red-brick sky was painted from Nature, or that unhappy palm in a picture close by was copied as it raised its head over that wall. The real scene would have stirred an emotion in the heart of the dullest member of the Stock Exchange, and, however unskilful the brushwork, if the man could hold a brush at all, there would have been something to show that the man had been in the presence of Nature. There is no art so indiscreet as painting, and the story of the painter's mind may be read in every picture.

But another word regarding these pictures would be waste of space and time. Let Mr. Menpes put away his camera, let him go out in the streets or the fields and there let him lose himself in the vastness and beauty of Nature. Let him study humbly the hang of a branch or the surface of a wall, striving to give to each their character. Let him try to render the mystery of a perspective in the blue evening or its harshness and violence in the early dawn. There is no need to go to Burma, there is mystery and poetry wherever there is atmosphere. In certain moments a backyard, with its pump and a child leaning to drink, will furnish sufficient motive for an exquisite picture; the atmosphere of the evening hour will endow it with melancholy and tenderness. But the insinuating poetry of light the camera is powerless to reproduce, and it cannot be imagined; Nature is parsimonious of this her greatest gift, surrendering it slowly, and only to those who love her best, and whose hearts are pure of mercenary thought.

G. M.

THE DRAMA.

IBSEN'S *Lady from the Sea* is understood to have been the result of a holiday visit to the seaside. It is a respectable trophy to have brought back from a bourn whence most travellers return with nothing more noteworthy than a few bloodthirsty specimens of the familiar Fauna of a Margate lodging-house. But it is not, for all that, a convincing play. One does, perhaps, detect a whiff of ocean in it, but no more than a whiff. The experiment of "sea water at your own doors" seems to be as hopeless an enterprise in literature as it is, I believe, in commerce. Ellida Wangel, the mermaid-heroine of the play, who finds the waters of the fiord "sickly," and declares (in curiously Bostonian English) that she "belongs out there," i.e., to the vasty deep, should be, metaphorically, dripping with brine, or, in Hedda Gabler's figure, have seaweed in her hair. That was doubtless the author's intention. Two obstacles, however, seem to have prevented its successful realisation, so far as it is to be divined from Mrs. Eleanor Marx Aveling's version of the play, which has been presented this week at Terry's Theatre. One is the lack of an actress of genius sufficient to make a plausible mermaid.

"When you've once for all become a land-animal, it isn't so easy to find your way back again to the sea," as the mermaid says; and actresses are necessarily land-animals. The other is the incongruity between this mystic Venus Anadyomene and her prosaic nineteenth-century surroundings. Ibsen the poet, the Ibsen of *Brand* and *Peer Gynt* we know, and Ibsen the sociologist we know; here he has attempted to "double" the two parts, with only half-success. Poetry and sociology will not, it seems, amalgamate. Taken as a fragment of sociology, the play suggests an alternative catastrophe to *A Doll's House*. Had Torvald Helmer, instead of expostulating when Nora threatened to leave him, politely replied, "Go by all means, my dear," opened the front door for her, and offered to assist her into the Scandinavian equivalent for a hansom, it is possible that she would have elected to stay at home. That is practically the procedure of the husband towards a wife of vagabond temper in many familiar pieces—in *Brutus*, *lâche César*, in *Divorçons*, in *La Petite Marquise*; but these are frivolous plays, and Ibsen (one must make his adversaries a present of this damaging admission) is nothing if not serious. Accordingly, the lady's roaming disposition is promoted to the dignity of a "craving for the vast and infinite," an "awakening and growing need for freedom." These are the fine phrases of her husband, who bids her choose "in freedom and on her own responsibility" between himself and the embodiment of "the vast and infinite"—a burly American sailor in knee-boots, who has exercised a mysterious fascination over the mermaid since, years before, he plighted his troth with her by flinging his ring, together with hers, into the sea. Thus presented with her freedom, the wife, mystic mermaid though she is, behaves precisely like the frivolous ladies in the Palais-Royal plays I have mentioned. "Freedom! Responsibility!" she says, "that transforms everything!" and, straightway casting off the American sailor and all the nostalgia of the sea which he had represented for her, she falls into her husband's arms, determined henceforth to be a land-animal and a good little mother to her grown-up step-daughters. As a contribution to the great Husband and Wife Question, the moral of the play will probably be claimed by both parties. It has the double charm of the famous impressionist picture in *La Cigale* (of Meilhac and Halévy, not Audran) which, according to the end you turned up, represented either a red sunset over a blue sea or the tawny desert under an azure sky. Wives with a velleity for emancipation will say that the play concedes the right of elopement. The husbands, unspeakable Turks to a man, will retort that the concession of the right destroys the sole motive for its exercise.

In any case, people with a keen scent for irony will be able to find what is ostensibly a serious sociological drama "full," like Jeames de la Pluche's conversation, "of lacy ally and easy plesntry." Two minor figures are genuinely comic. A boyish sculptor coolly asks a damsel to remain single, and "to think of him" sympathetically, during his 'prentice years. "It would help me so much, as an artist," he explains, "the knowledge that somewhere in the world a young, exquisite, silent woman is secretly dreaming of me; and she, having no special vocation in life, can so easily do it." Ultimate marriage with the exquisite and silent woman is no part of his scheme. "When I've made my way, she will be a bit too old for me, I fancy." Therefore, when she has duly encouraged his artistic development, she is to stand aside, that he may marry her younger sister. A characteristic touch of grim humour is added to this by the fact that the sculptor is, all unaware, dying of rapid consumption. Equally diverting in another way is the younger sister in question, who finds the sculptor's ignorance of his impending fate, the anticipation of wearing mourning for him, the bald spot on her tutor's head, and, indeed, every gruesome or trivial feature in the Cosmos, "fascinating." Compared with these subalterns, the

major personages of the play are failures. The mermaid-wife and her Yankee merman are embodied dreams; and dreams (except when a Shakespeare dreams them o' Midsummer Nights) fade in the garish light of the stage. The husband I am prompted by the unspeakable Turk within me to call a poor hen-pecked creature. The tutor with the "fascinating" bald spot is a bore. No final judgment, however, can be pronounced on the play until it has been properly played. With every desire to recognise the excellent intentions of Miss Rose Meller and her companions at Terry's, one is unable to accept their performance as anything like an adequate representation of *The Lady from the Sea*. They are all too obtrusively—land-animals.

At the Lyceum we now have the light that never was on sea or land, the lime-light of Dumasian romance, in the revival of *The Corsican Brothers*, choke-full of ghosts, gory wounds, and such other grisly details as the younger Miss Wangel would certainly have found "fascinating." It is difficult to understand why ten years should have been allowed to elapse since the last production of this play at the Lyceum, for it gives freer scope than perhaps any other melodrama in the repertory of the theatre for two of Mr. Henry Irving's most conspicuous talents: his talent for stage "doubling," and his talent for stage management. The skill with which he marks the difference between Louis and Fabien dei Franchi, which is *ex hypothesi* precisely that 'twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee, is as great an achievement in one way as his setting of the Bal de l'Opéra and Fontainebleau scenes is in another. But he must have a care, lest his conscientious reproductions of Parisian frivolities shock the severe matrons (not all of whom, he should remember, are *nées* Hilda Wangel) in the Lyceum stalls. There is, for instance, a picture in the Baron de Montgiron's room which is dangerously like that "Venus and Adonis" which kept poor Mrs. Disraeli awake half the night in the task of preventing her husband looking at it. Mr. Terriss resumes his old part of Château-Renaud, with great advantage to the play. I know not which the more to admire, the cold-blooded ferocity with which Mr. Terriss wipes his rapier after slaying Brother Tweedledee or the hot-blooded ferocity with which Brother Tweedledum drives his broken weapon into the heart of Mr. Terriss. The D'Orsay dresses are all good, especially that of Mr. Haviland in the first act, which is a real triumph of sartorial archæology. Indeed, the whole performance of this absurd, bombastic, fee-faw-fum play is a thing of delight.

So will the performance of Miss Ellen Terry be, as the heroine of the little piece *Nance Oldfield* which precedes the melodrama, when the great actress of our own day is a little more perfect in the words set down for the great actress of Queen Anne's. There is a characteristically snarling passage in Swift's *Journal* to Stella about Mrs. Oldfield at a rehearsal of *Cato*. "We stood on the stage, and it was foolish enough to see the actors prompted every moment; and the lady" (Swift uses another word) "that acts Cato's daughter out in the midst of a passionate part, and then calling out 'What's next?'" On Tuesday night at the Lyceum we had, not the lady who acts Cato's daughter, but the lady who acts the lady who acted Cato's daughter, if not being prompted every moment, more than once asking "What's next?" This, no doubt, was to be set down to that first-night nervousness which sometimes attacks the finest artists more violently than their inferiors. The little play, which is sufficiently described as the second act of *David Garrick* with the sexes of the personages reversed, gives Miss Terry full opportunity of being her most engaging self, and Mr. Gordon Craig of proving the law of heredity by his over-lavish display of what may be called the Terry system of gesture. At present he acts too much with his hands, but still so as to let it be seen that he will by-and-by act with his head.

A. B. W.

CRICKET *FIN DE SIÈCLE*.

THE sporting journalist, who knows everything, has been heard to declare that popular interest in cricket is on the decline. The report is credible. The taste of the people is robust, and, as things stand, it is conceivable that the present state of the art and profession of cricket may well be distasteful to it. It is notorious that the game is becoming more and more a matter of finesse. *Fin de siècle* lies heavy on it—heavy as frost and deep almost as life. The veterans who still lag on the stage, as well as the veteran of veterans who most gallantly and stoutly figures on it, at once grey dean and fresh curate, colt and past-master, of his profession, represent a rapidly vanishing method. The prevailing batting style is Arthur Shrewsbury's, and the game played in this week's highly interesting match of North v. South is about as remote from the traditions dating from the earlier years of the Graces—when "W. G." was "becoming" and "Henry" and "E. M." "were"—as was the cricket of 1875 from that of 1815.

The old game—the good old game—was brilliant, dashing, forward and backward play, the motto of which was: "Hit everything that is not absolutely deadly, play hard forward, finesse back for singles and twos, and, above all, be picturesque and striking." This is the game that the greatest cricketer who ever lived, or is likely to live, plays in 1891, precisely as he played it in 1871, with the highly improper result that he to-day shares equally with Mr. Gladstone the reputation of being the greatest living Englishman. But then Dr. Grace is, as we have explained, no longer the accepted Master—to borrow a term from the Blavatsky cult. The shadow of Shrewsbury, the most patient, level-headed, and equable bat of the century, looms large in the view of the cricketer who looks at the game, as the Ibsenite regards the drama, as criticism of life. For a time the Notts professional, with his hard, sound, unenterprising ways, was a voice crying in the wilderness, and the gospel of "stonewalling" was preached to deaf ears. Finally, he found a convert in his colleague Gunn—Gunn, a man framed in the prodigality of Nature to be a perfect and unapproachable "slogger." William Gunn's conversion settled the business. Henceforth the motto has been, "Keep up your wicket and your average," and the Old Guard traditions of free hitting and vigorous mastery of the ball have been more and more slipping into disrepute in favour of the safer methods of scoring briskly only off harmless bowling. This week, for instance, it has been worth one's while to watch, in the instructive match between North and South, how veterans like Barnes, who in the old days never dreamed of playing wisely, and who as a result almost invariably played well, have fallen into the defensive style of batting. Even Maurice Read, the hero of many a reckless hundred, is tailing in with the Shrewsbury lead. The fact that "W. G." alone is unchanged is by no means imputed to him for righteousness. Why should he be hitting fours when the Shrewsbury manual clearly enjoins a safe "poke" for nothing? Why should he make runs, as M. Jourdain made passes, regardless of the rules of the game? The young man from the pavilion, with his eye-glass on his mother age—his grandmother age—asks these questions in all seriousness, and getting no answer from the sixpenny benches, naturally concludes that cricket is going to the dogs.

The plain fact about it is that it is really suffering from the over-carefulness of the professional, cumbered, like Martha, with the care of much serving a fickle public. With increasing competition from young players, it is essential that the veterans should do all they know, and should never suffer juvenile dash to get the better of the trained instinct of a batsman with an experience stretching over a decade of the best bowling in England and Australia. The inevitable result, however, is happening. The diminishing attendance at Rylott's

benefit match, played on a gorgeous May day, with the help of the most accomplished performers in England, is an ominous sign that if cricket is to lose the practised recklessness of other days, it will drop out of its place as the first of English sports.

THE WEEK.

A CERTAIN barrister of some note, who makes about a thousand a year by his novels and stories in addition to his professional earnings, is said to have filled up his last income-tax schedule as follows: Profession, Law—so much; Trade, Literature—so much. True or not, we are here face to face with one fact which has been recognised ever since the opening of Grub Street, and with another not perhaps so generally known. That literature, or rather writing, for nearly two hundred years now, has been followed as a trade by hosts of needy or prosperous scholars and others, all the world knows. Does it know also that those who take cheerfully to writing as a trade, and nothing else, are often the very men who, from their circumstances, might be expected to produce literature? The ever-increasing numbers, ambitious of literary distinction, who flock to London yearly, to become hacks and journalists, regard the work by which they gain a livelihood as a mere industry, a stepping-stone to higher things—alas! a stepping-stone on which the great majority of them have to maintain a precarious footing all their lives. But they do not choose the inferior work that pays: they offer, or they think they offer, the public, through the publishers, bread; but the public—still the thought of the hack—wants stones, and these they are forced sorrowfully to supply. What wonder if they sometimes take to laying about them with scorpions! And what wonder if they often accept their fate and become fat and flourishing!

In most cases it is the men with some leisure and sufficient, if not large, incomes who deliberately choose to produce stories. Being well-to-do, they appreciate the value of money more than the hack, and are consequently utterly indifferent to the quality of their work so long as it suits the popular purse. If the public will have chicory instead of coffee, what concern is that of theirs? "Literature is a trade," they say; "because we follow it, and make it pay too." To them a syllogism is only a figure of speech to be mixed, like metaphors, and "exhibited" when required.

PUBLISHING, also, has become a trade—"the trade," in fact. It was once an art; and most publishers try to combine the two interests. To the list of London publishers who endeavour to maintain artistic traditions is now to be added a new house—that of MESSRS. LAWRENCE & BULLEN, of New Bond Street. All lovers of literature owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. BULLEN for the "rich and various gems" which he has gathered from the "inlaid bosom" of Elizabethan poetry. A publisher who would make his business an art must be a critic, a qualification which Mr. BULLEN possesses in a high degree. It is said that his partner, Mr. LAWRENCE, is also a keen critic of painting and drawing, as well as of literature, and an adept in all the mysteries of the art he has chosen to follow. To publish nothing altogether unworthy of the name of literature, and nothing in a style unbecoming good work, is a high aim. Lovers of literature will wish MESSRS. LAWRENCE & BULLEN all success, and watch their career with interest.

THE other week we were inclined to assent to TOURGÉNIEFF's dictum that one cannot have a style

in two languages. An achievement of MADAME DARMESTETER'S (MARY ROBINSON) in the current number of the *Revue Bleue* goes far to make us change our minds. "Les Ballades de la Dauphine, Marguerite d'Écosse," a story of the time of Charles VII., written in what is much more than a colourable imitation of antique French, is really a marvel. We all knew MADAME DARMESTETER'S intimate acquaintance with French history and literature; but it was impossible to imagine that she could sing so well in English, and tell a story so quaintly in French. The story purports to be the narrative of Perrette de Villequier regarding the illness and death of MARGARET, that daughter of JAMES I. of Scotland who had the misfortune to marry the Dauphin, afterwards LOUIS XI. The refusal of MARGARET on her death-bed to forgive the man whom God hates is powerfully dramatic.

OPINION in France regarding the greatest French ecclesiastic, BOSSUET, has passed through many fluctuations. "There are three kinds of reasoning, or rather of resounding" (Il y a trois sortes de raisonnements, ou plutôt de résonnements) said the ABBÉ GALIANI. "The clattering of pots, which is the commonest; the ding-dong of bells, like the eloquence of BOSSUET and ROUSSEAU; and lastly, the profound common-sense of men like VOLTAIRE, BUFFON, and DIDEROT": a remark which states fairly the general estimate of BOSSUET in the eighteenth century. Under the First Empire there was a revival of interest in his style, but his matter was considered inferior. Towards 1825 the religious policy of the Restoration Government gave his writings a certain vogue for some months, but by 1827 critics were doubting his power as a dialectician, and finding him a sublime orator, who had never said anything of true import—an opinion which continued until the present day. It is true, SAINTE-BEUVE praised him, but with a grudge; he called him "the prophet of things that have happened."

THE rehabilitation of BOSSUET, to which the writings of MM. FLOQUET, GANDAR, and others contributed, may be said to have been completed by the publication of M. G. LANSON'S "Bossuet" (LECÈNE ET OUDIN), in which the author endeavours to show that, without sharing BOSSUET'S faith, one can appreciate his veracity, and power as a thinker. The absurd prejudice which made him out to be a mere bigot and orator may now be deemed at an end; and while he ranks as the foremost Catholic apologist of Christianity, he has also a right to a place among the chief thinkers—cleric or lay—of modern times.

IN literature, as in art, *genre* always tends to deteriorate into caricature. Some years ago French writers of character-studies made the discovery that good-natured ignoramuses, hare-brains, and other delightful people of both sexes, who start talking without knowing whether they have anything to say or not, speak in a most elliptical fashion, lopping off both the heads and the tails of their phrases. GYP was the first to popularise this style of dialogue, and M. HENRI LAVEDAN has carried it to its limit, especially in his last book, "La Haute" (KOLB), a volume of short but brilliant and suggestive dialogues and stories, containing much caustic criticism of the manners and morals of the day.

THE French, with their charming *insouciance* in the matter of English orthography, spell the name of the newest associate of the Académie des Inscriptions MR. "WITHLLEY" STOKES. MR. STOKES is the successor of M. DE MIKLOSICH, recently deceased. M. DE MIKLOSICH was a philologist, a notable authority on Slavonic dialects.

No more tastefully bound books are issued from the English press at present than those that bear the imprint of MR. DAVID STOTT. His "Masterpieces of Foreign Authors," considering the price, is almost a unique series. The most recent addition to this important library is entitled "Portraits of Women," being translations from SAINTE-BEUVE by HELEN STOTT.

THE surrender of Cape Colony to the British forces in 1795 brought together two branches of the same race, for conquerors and conquered were of one stock—the north Netherlanders, of all Europeans, being closest in blood to the English. To this fact the languages bear testimony; and every schoolboy now knows the philological rhyme—

"Good butter and good cheese
Are good English and good Fries."

So many and interesting are the changes that have taken place in the neighbourhood of the Cape since 1795 that MR. GEORGE MCCALL THEAL has been able to write a bulky octavo volume, entitled "The History of South Africa" (SONNENSCHNEIN), dealing with events from the date of the British conquest till 1834.

ANTHOLOGIES of contemporary poetry seem to be in fashion. MR. G. B. ROBERTS has made a selection from the works of "Younger American Poets" (GRIFFITH, FARRAN), which includes over a hundred names. Some Canadian poetry is given, of which that in French is specially interesting. LOUIS FRECHETTE supplies a poem on "Le Drapeau Anglais." It begins—

"Regarde, me disait mon père,
Ce drapeau vaillamment porté;
Il a fait ton pays prospère,
Et respecte ta liberté.
C'est le drapeau de l'Angleterre" . . .

Anyone who does not experience at least a slight thrill on reading these lines—a celebration of the English flag in the French language—must be somewhat callous.

IS LEMPRIERE at last to be superseded? The "Dictionary of Classical Antiquities" which MESSRS. SWAN SONNENSCHNEIN issue in a popular style is founded on a work by DR. OSKAR SEYFFERT, of Berlin. DR. SEYFFERT'S book has attained a wide circulation in Germany, and if good editing—by MESSRS. H. NETTLESHIP and J. E. SANDYS—attractive binding, clear type, and artistic illustrations count for anything, LEMPRIERE may well turn in his grave.

MR. ALLAN PARK PATON, one of the most enthusiastic students of SHAKESPEARE in the country, has resumed the publication of his "Hamnet Shakspeare." The main feature of MR. PATON'S edition is the reproduction of the capitals scattered throughout the text of the folios, which MR. PATON maintains were neither accidental, nor customary in the printing of the time, but marked in SHAKESPEARE'S manuscript by himself in order to teach the actors the emphatic words. The two new numbers of MR. PATON'S very interesting edition are Volumes VIII. and IX., containing *Othello* and *Antony and Cleopatra*. The first MR. PATON prefaces with some characteristic "remarks on passages" unnecessarily altered in many editions; and the second contains some "notices of strange press matters in the Shakspeare Folios." Part X. will be *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. MR. WILLIAM HUTCHISON, of Greenock, is the publisher.

A SECOND edition of MR. ROBERT BUCHANAN'S "Coming Terror" appears with a "note" by the author, in which that gentleman, after mentioning

If housekeepers are in earnest in wishing to benefit the unemployed in East London, they should buy BRYANT & MAY'S Matches, and refuse the foreign matches which are depriving the workers in East London of a large amount in weekly wages.

the *Times*, *Observer*, and *SPEAKER*, adds, "Altogether I have to congratulate myself on a fair measure of old-fashioned abuse." But MR. BUCHANAN is not wholly in the self-complacent mood. He is angry at any allusion having been made to his temper, and assures the world—with quite unnecessary emphasis—that he is "a singularly calm person" who writes "quite coolly and good-humouredly." We take note of his statement, which furnishes fresh evidence of the fact that the style is not the man.

THREE popular works are issued this week by MESSRS. SEELEY & CO. "New China and Old," by the VEN. ARTHUR E. MOULE, B.D.; "Achievements in Engineering," by L. F. VERNON-HARCOURT; and "The Arab and the African," by DR. S. TRISTRAM PRUEN. All three are capitably printed and profusely illustrated.

THERE has been more delay than was anticipated in the preparation of the "Guide-book to Books," owing to the peculiar difficulties of compiling a work of this nature, but it is now ready, and will be published by MR. HENRY FROWDE in the course of two or three weeks. The number of books on all subjects recommended in the "Guide" is about six thousand, and these have been carefully selected by more than a hundred specialists, many of them of the highest eminence. The "Guide-book" is arranged alphabetically by subjects, and gives, in addition to the titles of the books, the prices, and in many cases brief descriptive notes. It thus attempts to supply just that information about the books best worth consulting, which has hitherto only been obtainable by personal application to an expert. The editors are MR. E. B. SARGANT and MR. BERNHARD WHISHAW.

"THERE is no escape from the calamities we bring upon ourselves." Why, then, did MR. FENTON, knowing this, and quoting it on the fly-leaf of his pamphlet, call the poem it contains "Dora"? One might as well call a new play *Hamlet*. MR. ELLIOT STOCK is the publisher, and he also issues another volume of verse this week with a much better title, "Weeds from a Wild Garden." The author's name is not given.

THE fiction of the week includes, in three volumes, "The Hermit of Crizebeck" (HURST & BLACKETT), by HENRY CRESSWELL, and "Someone Must Suffer" (CHAPMAN), by H. CLIFFE HALLIDAY; and in one, "The Smuggler's Secret" (BLACKETT), by FRANK BARRETT; "Sir George," by FLORENCE HENNIKER (BENTLEY); "The Girl he did not Marry" (HUTCHINSON), by IZA DUFFUS HARDY; "The Prince and the Page" (MACMILLAN), by CHARLOTTE M. YONGE; "Eric Brighteyes" (MACMILLAN), by H. RIDER HAGGARD; and "Amaryllis," by "Georgios Drosines," the new volume of MR. FISHER UNWIN'S "Pseudonym Library."

It is to be feared that the public has learned to regard announcements of the farewell appearances of MR. SIMS REEVES with a certain measure of incredulity. Such announcements have been frequent enough for nearly half a score of years past to justify an incredulous world in receiving them with comparative indifference. But we fear that at last a real farewell has been taken of the public by one of its favourite servants, and that after last Monday night we shall never again see MR. SIMS REEVES occupying his old position on platform or stage. His farewell concert in the Albert Hall was a genuine triumph, graced by the presence of the Heir-Apparent and of representatives of all classes of that public which has so long admired him

and enjoyed his exceptional gifts. A career of more than fifty years as a public singer is, we imagine, unique in the history of popular vocalism. There is no need to say that MR. SIMS REEVES has deserved well of his fellow-countrymen, and we can only hope that in his retirement he will be able to enjoy substantial fruits of their gratitude.

MR. G. R. SIMS tells a pathetic little story in the *Referee* of how he met the other day an old friend of his whom he had not seen for twenty years, and this friend not only showed himself to be entirely ignorant of MR. SIMS'S success as a dramatist and journalist, but declared that he had repeatedly endeavoured to find out what he was doing during the last ten years, and had never been able to learn anything about him. The "littleness of fame" has thus been brought home even to so eminent a person as "Dagonet." He must console himself with the reflection that he is not the only man of eminence who has had to learn how limited is even the most widespread popularity. The other day the wife of a veteran novelist whose name is familiar to the whole reading world, received a visit from an old servant who had lived in the family some thirty years ago. The good woman explained that, having lost all trace of her old master and mistress, she had long been seeking to discover them, but had been unable to do so until she saw chance mention of the novelist in a penny weekly paper which occasionally gives its readers some personal particulars regarding eminent men. Week by week the novelist's name appears in some of the most widely circulated of our journals; day by day it is to be seen on every railway bookstall in the United Kingdom, and the advertising columns of the newspapers are seldom without it. But all this meant nothing to the good lady who was looking for her old master and mistress. It was only when a copy of *Answers* fell into her hands that at last a fame which its possessor might reasonably have regarded as world-wide, penetrated to her modest home.

THE AUSTRALASIAN FEDERAL CONVENTION.

MELBOURNE, March 30th.

THE Federal Convention has adjourned for an Easter recess, after agreeing to some terribly vague propositions in favour of unity, and elaborating the rough draft of a Constitution, which is to be discussed when the members assemble again. So far, I am afraid it must be said that the debates have been very disappointing to the general public. Nearly three weeks have been wasted in speeches, which were mostly well-informed and not unworthy of the subject, but which were evidently addressed to distant constituents though they were delivered to the Convention. Sir Henry Parkes and that portion of the press which insisted upon the debates being in public are altogether responsible for this waste of time; and the worst of it is that the time has not only been lost but has been employed in the creation of new difficulties. For instance, Western Australia, which owes its new Constitution very much to the zeal with which its neighbours backed it in Downing Street, and whose capital is at the mercy of any enemy who can disembark five hundred men, is trying to stipulate for connection with the other capitals by a railway 1,250 miles long, as the price of its very unimportant adhesion. The railway is bound to be constructed some day; but, of course, if Western Australia with its forty thousand people is to be bribed at the expense of a heavy charge on the Federal tax-payer, communities like those of Victoria and New South Wales may advance claims which the credit of the whole continent could not support. Meanwhile, every politician has chanted a psalm of praise to the abstract